

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

105th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 253

September 1, 1998, 9:39 a.m.
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MILITARY CONSTRUCTION APPROPRIATIONS/Conference, Passage

SUBJECT: Conference report to accompany the Military Construction Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1999 . . .
H.R. 4059. Agreeing to the conference report.

ACTION: CONFERENCE REPORT AGREED TO, 87-3

SYNOPSIS: The conference report to accompany H.R. 4059, the Military Construction Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1999, will provide \$8.450 billion in new budget authority (BA) for military construction, family housing, and base realignment and closure for the Department of Defense. This amount is \$666 million more than the Clinton Administration requested and is \$358 million less than provided last year (including emergency funds provided last year). Key details are provided below.

- Military construction: \$3.118 billion, including \$480.3 million for the National Guard and Reserves (the Administration only requested \$179.5 million for the Guard and Reserves).
- Military family housing: \$3.541 billion.
- Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC): \$1.631 billion.
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Security Investment Program: \$154.0 million.
- \$977 million will be spent on 142 earmarked projects.

Those favoring passage contended:

This conference report will advance the twin goals of promoting quality-of-life initiatives for our military men and women and of enhancing mission readiness. A total of \$8.4 billion will be provided for military construction, and 42 percent of the bill's funding will be for military housing. One of the primary reasons for the decline in morale in our military is that so much of the housing is substandard. In fact, much of that housing would be condemned if it were in private hands. We will never improve retention rates if we continue to give shabby treatment to the people who have volunteered to serve this country. Servicemen and women deserve

(See other side)

YEAS (87)				NAYS (3)		NOT VOTING (10)	
Republican (47 or 96%)		Democrats (40 or 98%)		Republicans (2 or 4%)	Democrats (1 or 2%)	Republicans (6)	Democrats (4)
Abraham	Hutchinson	Akaka	Kennedy	Kyl	Robb	Coverdell ⁻²	Bingaman ⁻²
Allard	Hutchison	Baucus	Kerrey	McCain		Domenici ⁻²	Glenn ⁻²
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Biden	Kerry			Gramm ⁻²	Hollings ^{-2AY}
Bennett	Jeffords	Boxer	Kohl			Helms ^{-3AY}	Inouye ⁻²
Bond	Kempthorne	Breaux	Landrieu			Murkowski ⁻²	
Brownback	Lott	Bryan	Lautenberg			Warner ⁻²	
Burns	Lugar	Bumpers	Leahy				
Campbell	Mack	Byrd	Levin				
Chafee	McConnell	Cleland	Lieberman				
Coats	Nickles	Conrad	Mikulski				
Cochran	Roberts	Daschle	Moseley-Braun				
Collins	Roth	Dodd	Moynihan				
Craig	Santorum	Dorgan	Murray				
D'Amato	Sessions	Durbin	Reed				
DeWine	Shelby	Feingold	Reid				
Enzi	Smith, Bob	Feinstein	Rockefeller				
Faircloth	Smith, Gordon	Ford	Sarbanes				
Frist	Snowe	Graham	Torricelli				
Gorton	Specter	Harkin	Wellstone				
Grams	Stevens	Johnson	Wyden				
Grassley	Thomas						
Gregg	Thompson						
Hagel	Thurmond						
Hatch							

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

- 1—Official Business
- 2—Necessarily Absent
- 3—Illness
- 4—Other

SYMBOLS:

- AY—Announced Yea
- AN—Announced Nay
- PY—Paired Yea
- PN—Paired Nay

to have decent housing, and we are proud of the projects that we have funded in this bill to give it to them. Similarly, we are proud of many of the quality-of-life projects that we have funded, such as for child development centers and for medical facilities. Some Senators have criticized this funding. They have said that our military has been dangerously weakened over the past several years, so instead of paying for quality-of-life projects we should increase funding for military procurement, maintenance, and training. Many of us agree that our military has been weakened, but we do not think that we are faced with an “either-or” choice. In fact, we believe that quality-of-life projects, in addition to being deserved by our military personnel, are necessary to rebuild our forces because they improve morale and thus the effectiveness of our forces. Another complaint is that this bill provides a number of earmarks for National Guard and Reserve projects. So many projects were added because the Administration, again, refused to request adequate funding. Congress was therefore forced, again, to set the priorities for the Guard and Reserves. We note that for the first time in the United States’ history, more than 50 percent of the men and women serving in the Armed Forces are in the National Guard and Reserves. As our reliance on them increases, it will become increasingly important to see to it that their funding needs are met. We hope that the Administration will come to this realization and stop its bias against our reserve forces. If it had been possible within budget constraints, we would have appropriated much more money than will be provided by this bill. Overall, though, we are very pleased with the way that available funds will be distributed. We urge our colleagues to vote in favor of passage.

Those opposing passage contended:

This conference report should be opposed because it contains earmarked funding for a huge number of construction projects of dubious value. It will siphon off nearly \$1 billion in desperately needed funds for projects that were not requested by the military and which we believe are not needed. This bill will fund 45 unrequested Guard and Reserve projects alone. It will also pay for such extravagances as child development centers, physical fitness centers, and control towers at Air Force Bases that already have operational control towers. Currently, service pay is so low that 12,000 personnel are eligible for food stamps, morale is so low that only 28 percent of Air Force pilots will reenlist despite the promise of huge bonuses, and readiness funding is so inadequate that forces that do not meet military standards are being sent into combat zones. Under these circumstances, it is inexcusable to spend money on low-priority projects. In protest, we will vote against this conference report.